



**Okanagan Basin**  
WATER BOARD

**BOARD REPORT: June 9, 2017**

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### **OBWB Directors**

**Tracy Gray - Chair,**  
Regional District of Central  
Okanagan

**Juliette Cunningham - Vice-  
Chair,** Regional District of  
North Okanagan

**Doug Dirk,** Regional District of  
North Okanagan

**Rick Fairbairn,** Regional  
District of North Okanagan

**Doug Findlater,** Regional  
District of Central Okanagan

**Cindy Fortin,** Regional District  
of Central Okanagan

**Ron Hovanes,** Regional  
District of Okanagan-  
Similkameen

**Sue McKortoff,** Regional  
District of Okanagan-  
Similkameen

**Peter Waterman,** Regional  
District of Okanagan-  
Similkameen

**Lisa Wilson,** Okanagan Nation  
Alliance

**Toby Pike,** Water Supply  
Association of B.C.

**Brian Guy,** Okanagan Water  
Stewardship Council

**The next regular meeting of  
the OBWB will be at 10 a.m.  
August 1, 2017 at Regional  
District of Central Okanagan  
in Kelowna.**

### **Okanagan Basin Water Board Meeting Highlights**

**Water Board updated on flooding situation:** Executive Director Anna Warwick Sears provided a valley-wide perspective on current flooding, noting inflow into Okanagan Lake appears to be flat-lining and should continue this trend unless there are significant rains. This is an important improvement since, for the last few weeks, inflow into the lake was greater than what could be released through dams in the south Okanagan without causing erosion problems. In addressing what led to current conditions, Sears added it was thought the valley was at risk for drought this summer with Mission Creek snowpack at 85% of normal in March, but then the April rains came. Since then, we have seen rain-on-snow events, as well as warm temperatures causing increased snowmelt. Climate change models have suggested the Okanagan is going to see more extreme weather. With Okanagan Lake levels now surpassing the 1948 historic flood record, local governments will need to review the new high water mark and how to prepare for these extreme events. Looking ahead, the summer is forecasted to be drier than normal for most of B.C. The Southern Interior is expected to have more 30+ degrees Celsius days than normal.

**Directors report on mussel meeting in Ottawa:** Chair Tracy Gray reported on a June 2 meeting she and a number of directors attended in Ottawa with Ministry of Fisheries and Oceans Canada. The directors were in the nation's capital for the Federation of Canadian Municipalities conference and requested a meeting with the ministry to discuss invasive mussels. In addition to the Chair, Vice-Chair Juliette Cunningham, Dir. and Past-Chair Doug Findlater and Dir. Peter Waterman attended the meeting. Also in attendance were Burnaby North-Seymour MP Terry Beech, who is also Parliamentary Secretary to Min. of Fisheries and Oceans (DFO), Nicholas Winfield – Director General Ecosystems Management for DFO, Ashraf Amlani – DFO Special Assistant for Pacific-West Coast, and Kelowna-Lake Country MP Stephen Fuhr. Federal officials acknowledged \$43 million over five years was allocated in the most recent budget to address aquatic invasive species in Canada. OBWB directors asked that some funding be spent to address the mussels. Gray added the feds agreed to OBWB's request that a senior official attend an upcoming Pacific NorthWest Economic Region summit where the mussels will be addressed. And, Beech and Fuhr committed to talk with Canada Border Services Agency about enhanced border protection.

**Joint Board-Council session hears special invasive mussel presentation:** The Water Board and its technical advisory body, the Water Stewardship Council, heard presentations from Ontario-based environmental scientist Renata Claudi, and Okanagan-based biologist Heather Larratt. The two were presenting on the vulnerability of Okanagan watershed infrastructure to invasive mussels, the importance of prevention measures and potential control options. With no proven method to eradicate the mussels once they arrive that doesn't also cause significant environmental impacts, the experts stressed prevention measures. A 2013 report by Larratt estimated the cost to the Okanagan at \$43 million per year to manage the mussels. With watercraft being the number one way the mussels are introduced, the "Clean-Drain-Dry" protocol was promoted as the best way to prevent the spread. Learn more about the mussels and how to Clean-Drain-Dry at [www.DontMoveAMussel.ca/prevention](http://www.DontMoveAMussel.ca/prevention).

**For more information, please visit: [www.OBWB.ca](http://www.OBWB.ca)**